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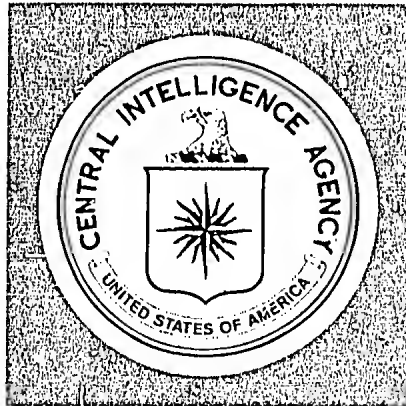
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Cease-Fire Developments

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Cease-Fire Developments

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The Military Situation

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CAMBODIAThe Military Situation

Government forces, supported by US air power, have not yet cleared the east bank of the Mekong River opposite Phnom Penh. A section of Route 6 about ten miles north of Phnom Penh was cut on 26 April, and government troops have been sent from Phnom Penh to sweep the area. Southeast of the capital, Khmer Communist forces overran a government outpost along the east bank of the Mekong above Neak Luong and two government outposts nearby are surrounded. The Communists now control about a 15-mile stretch of the river's east bank north of Neak Luong.

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An Interview with Sihanouk

Sihanouk, now back in Peking, is expressing confidence about his political future and is reiterating a hard line on a settlement. [REDACTED]

Sihanouk continued to picture himself as only the titular leader of the Communist insurgents, but expressed new hope of being able to assert a certain degree of authority after a Communist "victory." Sihanouk stressed that an end to the conflict would require the removal of a number of top political

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leaders in Phnom Penh in addition to President Lon Nol. He said in particular that he would "never forgive" Sirik Matak. He also repeated his offer to negotiate directly with President Nixon or his representative, claiming that Khmer Communist leaders had empowered him to do so. Sihanouk said that he would not be returning to Cambodia this year unless there was an "unexpected event."

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LAOS

The Military Situation

Communist shelling and ground probes on 26 April forced the remaining government troops from positions some five miles southwest of Tha Viang. Elsewhere, military activity continues at a very low level.

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